



LAS Links – FAQ

Spring 2008

Placement Test Questions

If a student enters the school corporation with a current LAS Links summative test score, is it required that the LAS Links placement test be administered?

In order for a LAS Links score to be considered current, the test must have been administered within one calendar year. If a recent score is available, the placement test does not need to be administered.

For a student who has been out of school for more than one year but has an earlier LAS Links score, is it necessary to administer the placement test?

In order for a LAS Links score to be considered current, the test must have been administered within one calendar year. If no recent score is available, the placement test should be administered.

For a student enrolling in the school district during the spring summative testing window, should the LAS Links placement or summative test be administered?

Title III: Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students requires that language minority students be assessed for English proficiency, and that their parents be notified of the proficiency assessment results, within 30 calendar days of initial enrollment or 2 weeks of late enrollment. Therefore, the LAS Links placement test should be administered to all enrolling students for whom no recent LAS Links score is available. The LAS Links summative test may be administered subsequently for those students who score a Level 1-4 on the placement test.

What is the appropriate process to follow if a language minority (LM) student arrives in the district with an IEP that indicates the student is incapable of participating in standardized testing? Should the student be assessed with LAS Links placement test or not?

If the student's IEP indicates that he or she is incapable of participating in standardized testing, this indication applies to both standardized academic (ISTEP+) and English proficiency (LAS Links) assessment. Therefore, the student would not be assessed for language proficiency.

Language minority students must participate in the LAS Links Assessment unless they are assessed *only* with the ISTAR assessment.

Does the legal requirement to assess the language proficiency of all language minority students apply to foreign exchange students?

Yes, in the absence of documentation attesting to the foreign exchange student's fluency in English. There is no exclusion in *Title III* law for foreign exchange students; therefore, the requirement to assess the proficiency of all language minority students applies.

When an LEP student's parents refuse services in the language development program, is the student still included in LAS Links testing?

Parent refusal of services in the language development program applies only to direct language development instructional services, and does not affect the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), classroom and standardized test accommodations, or participation in the LAS Links English proficiency assessment.

Is a large print version of the LAS Links Placement Test available? If not, how should vision-impaired students be assessed for proficiency?

No, only one standard version of the Placement Test is available.

Kindergarten

Are Kindergarten students assessed for initial placement using the K-1 LAS Links Placement Test or the Pre-LAS 2000?

Starting in Fall 2007, Kindergarten students should be assessed for initial placement using the Pre-LAS 2000.

If incoming kindergarten students were assessed with the K-1 LAS Links placement test prior to the implementation of the Pre-LAS 2000, must they be retested with the Pre-LAS?

No, the earlier K-1 LAS Links placement test result may be utilized.

How is the Pre-Literacy section of the Pre-LAS 2000 to be used?

The results of the Pre-Literacy section of the Pre-LAS 2000 are to be used only for informational purposes, to assist teaching staff in identifying a LEP student's literacy skills. The results of the Oral section, Level 1-5, of the Pre-LAS 2000 determine and report the student's language level.

Is the administration of the Pre-Literacy section of the Pre-LAS 2000 required?

Yes, all components of the Pre-LAS 2000 are to be administered, although the Pre-Literacy section is not to be factored into the student's score.

Scoring

How is a specific language level to be determined using the LAS Links Placement Test, when the results are only divided into Not Proficient (NP), Approaching Proficient (AP), and Proficient (P)?

The LAS Links placement test is used for making a preliminary approximation of a language minority student's level of English proficiency, and the results are to be used in conjunction with authentic assessment in determining the student's language level for the purpose of initial placement into the language development program. A score of NP corresponds to Levels 1 & 2, AP corresponds to Levels 3 & 4, and P corresponds to Level 5. Division of Language Minority and Migrant Programs Levels of English Proficiency guidance, available at <https://www.doe.state.in.us/lmmp/pdf/languagelevels.pdf> should be utilized to make the distinction between Levels 1/2 or Levels 3/4.

LAS Links Questions

Students to test:

Who should be included in the 2008 LAS Links administration?

This spring's administration must include all LEP students in grades K-12, as well as any students that scored an Overall Level 5 for the first time on LAS Links in Spring 2007. Students scoring fluent (Level 5) on the LAS Links Placement Test in Fall 2007 **need not** be included in the Spring 2008 administration.

Should graduating seniors be included in testing?

Yes, the LAS Links assessment must be given to LEP students in grades K-12 on an annual basis.

Must students be tested if their parents have refused services? Can parents refuse testing?

English proficiency testing of all limited English proficient (LEP) students is **required** by Title III, Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students. The federal requirement of conducting annual English proficiency assessment applies to all public schools. Testing is not optional and cannot be refused.

If the school district has re-issued the Home Language Survey for this year and parents have indicated English as the only language, when in the past they have indicated other home languages, can I exclude the student from testing?

The Home Language Survey was recently revised so that the focus of the survey is on the home language or languages that the **student** uses for communication, and the new version is available at <http://www.doe.state.in.us/lmmp/pdf/homelanguagesurvey.pdf>. The new version should be implemented to ensure accurate identification of all language minority students.

If, based on the Home Language Survey, a student was previously tested for English language proficiency and was found to be limited English proficient, annual testing with LAS Links must continue until the student scores a Level 5 twice consecutively.

How should new students who enter during the administration window be treated? Should they be assessed with the full LAS Links, or the placement test only?

Title III: Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students requires that language minority students be assessed for English proficiency, and that their parents be notified of the proficiency assessment results, within 30 calendar days of initial enrollment or 2 weeks of late enrollment. Therefore, the LAS Links placement test should be administered to all enrolling students for whom no recent LAS Links score is available. The LAS Links summative test may be administered subsequently for those students who score a Level 1-4 on the placement test.

Why must we continue to test students who had been exited from the ESL program under previous guidelines, and who may have tested Level 5 (FEP) on previously-approved proficiency assessment instruments?

The three previously-approved English language proficiency instruments (*Woodcock-Muñoz, Language Assessment Scales, and Idea Proficiency Test*) have been found to be insufficient measures of both conversational and academic English skills. Therefore, students who were exited from language development services based on a score from a previous test must be re-evaluated for English

proficiency using the LAS Links assessment. As of spring of 2006, all students exited in the previous two years (since 2004) should have been re-assessed for proficiency with LAS Links. If those students received a score of Level 5 on LAS Links in 2006 and score a Level 5 again in 2007, they will have begun formal monitoring and will no longer need to participate in the LAS Links English proficiency assessment. Students exited prior to 2004 do not need to be included in LAS Links testing.

Test Administration:

Is translation of LAS Links test directions permissible?

No. Translation of any test material is **not permissible**.

May test directions be repeated?

Yes, test directions may be repeated as many times as desired. Direct test material (such as test items, questions, and answer options) **may not** be repeated.

What accommodations may be provided to LEP students with a disability?

Standardized assessment accommodations outlined in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan may be applied to the LAS Links administration. Students should be given the opportunity to attempt all sections of the test.

How should the Group Information Sheets (GIS) be divided?

At a minimum, the Group Information Sheets must be divided by individual grade. If a school corporation has elected to further divide students by level of English proficiency and wishes for the reports to be returned in the same way, separate Group Information Sheets may be created for those subgroups.

Are blank sheets of paper permissible in addition to the student test booklet?

Yes. As with ISTEP+, blank sheets of paper may be utilized by students during test administration. These extra sheets must be removed from testing materials prior to submitting completed tests to CTB.

What elements of a student's LAS Links scoring information may be shared with another Indiana school district?

A student's scoring information can only be shared with another school corporation if/when a student moves to that corporation. As with ISTEP+ data, LAS Links scores are FERPA-protected.

Is recommended that schools include a copy of a student's LAS Links Student Proficiency Report in the student's cumulative folder.

If one or more LAS Links subtests are missed, how will the student's Overall Score be determined?

An overall score can only be determined when a completed test is submitted for scoring.

What is the appropriate process to follow if it is determined that a student has purposefully mismarked the answer sheet on the LAS Links, skewing the score?

The test may need to be invalidated. In case of this event, please contact the Indiana Department of Education, Division of Language Minority and Migrant Programs via telephone at (800) 382-9962.

Barcode:

What was the source of the barcode label data?

The 2008 LAS Links barcode labels were created based on the data submitted by corporations via the STN Application Center online during the December 3-14, 2007 window.

What do I do if the barcode I received for a student contains errors such as a misspelled name? May the barcode label still be used?

Erroneous information on the barcode label may be corrected by bubbling in the correct information on the student test booklet. Any information bubbled on the student test booklet will override what is included on the barcode for that section only, and will not invalidate the entire barcode label.

Are the barcode labels I received from CTB the roster of students I should be testing?

The barcode labels *do not serve as a roster of students to test* – corporations should combine local LEP student data with State guidance to determine the group of language minority students to participate in LAS Links. School corporations may have received barcode labels for students who have since left the corporation or do not need to be tested, and in turn, the corporation may not have received barcode labels for some students who need to be tested. Please contact the Indiana Department of Education for questions regarding students to be included in LAS Links.

I received several barcode labels for students no longer enrolled in our district. What should I do with these labels?

Unused barcode labels should be destroyed in a secure manner, such as by shredding. The labels do not need to be returned with testing materials.

Required Information:

Which are the required fields on the student test booklet?

The table below provides the biographical fields for the LAS links test that are required to be hand-bubbled when a barcode label is used and when a barcode label is not used. The test coordinator received a roster of the coded field for each student. If you are not the Test Coordinator it is best to confirm with the Corporations Test Coordinator

Field Number	Field Title	Required with Barcode	Required without Barcode
1	Student Name	No	Yes
2	Teacher Name, School Name, and District	No	Yes
3	Birth Date	No	Yes
4	Gender	No	Yes
5	Grade	No	Yes
6	Student ID Number*	No	Yes
7	Ethnicity	No	Yes
8	Home Language ♦	Yes (If Applicable)	Yes (If Applicable)

9	Purpose of Test**	No	Yes
10	Date Testing Completed	Yes	Yes
11	Test Invalidation	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>
12	Test Exemptions	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>
13	Absent	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>
14	USA School Enrollment	No	No
15	Mobility	No	No
16	Program Participation	No	No
17	Special Education	No	No
18	Disability	No	No
19	Accommodations	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>
20	Special Codes***	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>
T	First Time Tester	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>	<i>Yes (If Applicable)</i>

♦The Home Language field will need to be coded if the student's home language is Spanish and the student requires a Spanish Home report. CTB will print a copy of the Spanish Home reports for student who's Home Language is coded as Spanish.

* You must use the Student Testing Number (STN) in the Student ID Number field. For public school students, a "0" should be entered in the first column, followed by the student's nine-digit STN. For non-public school students, a "9" should be entered in the first column, the alpha character should be replaced by the corresponding number (A=1, B=2, C=3, D=4, E=5) in the second column, and the other 8 digits of the STN should be entered in the remaining columns.

** Fill in the bubble for Annual Assessment only.

*** Fill in the bubble in column T and the corresponding number 1 for students who, in this administration, will be the first time that the student is administered the LAS Links® test.

Why is Field 20, Special Codes, a required field?

Field 20 is the mechanism that allows the IDOE to acquire data for federal reporting of students who are administer the LAS Links® test for the first time this year.

How should Field 6, Student ID Number, be completed? There are 10 columns, but Indiana only uses a 9-digit student test number.

For public school students, a "0" should be entered in the first column, followed by the student's nine-digit STN (Student Test Number). For students with non-public-generated STNs (those that begin with an alpha character), a "9" should be entered in the first column, the alpha character should be replaced by the corresponding number (A=1, B=2, C=3, D=4, E=5) in the second column, and the other 8 digits of the STN should be entered in the remaining columns.

Title III Requirements and Language Development Services: **How is the Title III parent notification requirement (within 30 calendar days of testing) to be implemented with the LAS Links spring assessment?**

School corporations have 30 days from the date test scores are received to inform parents of the results.

Are school districts required to send out a separate parent notification letter in the fall of the 2008-2009 school year?

This is a local decision, as the law requires only that parents be notified of the English language proficiency assessment results within 30 calendar days. School corporations may wish to send parents an additional notification at the beginning of the next school year to reiterate the decision to place a student in the language development program, but this is not required by law.

If ESL staff feel that a student who tested at a Level 5 is not truly ready to exit from language development services, can the student still receive services?

The transition from limited English proficiency to fluent English proficiency is marked by the first score of Level 5 on the LAS Links assessment, at which time the student is exited from daily English language development services, reclassified to fluent English proficient (FEP) status for reporting, and informal monitoring begins. The student must score at a Level 5 on the next administration of the LAS Links test in order to begin the formal two-year monitoring period. Throughout the two-year period of formal monitoring, former LEP students have access to language development services if needed, so students could continue to receive assistance for up to three years after initially scoring at a Level 5 of English proficiency.

Special Case Scenarios:

What is the correct procedure to follow when a student leaves the state or country mid-test? How should I indicate the date test was completed?

The last date the student actually participated in testing OR the last date of the testing window (March 14th) may be used for this purpose.

What is the correct procedure when a student transfers to another Indiana school district mid-test?

In this case, the student's test booklet should be forwarded to the receiving school through a traceable mailing system so that testing can be completed and test materials submitted to CTB for scoring.

What is the procedure to be followed when marking a section of the test "Invalid?"

The Indiana Department of Education, Division of Language Minority and Migrant Programs must be contacted in order to receive approval for marking a section of LAS Links "invalid." The Division may be reached via telephone at (800) 382-9962.

What is the correct procedure when a student of low English proficiency or low literacy skills (particularly at grades K and 1) is unable to perform on the reading or writing sections of the test? Should the teacher indicate such on the student test booklet?

The LAS Links examiner **may not** mark on the student test booklet unless the student's IEP (Individual Education Plan) indicates scribing as an approved accommodation. If no responses are marked in any section of the test, the student will be awarded the lowest obtainable scale score (LOSS) for that particular section.

How can I obtain the Braille version of LAS Links?

The Braille version of LAS Links may be ordered via telephone by calling the CTB Indiana Help Desk at (800) 282-1132.

Should language minority students in special education be included in this data collection?

Yes, unless the student's IEP or 504 Plan indicates that the student is not to participate in academic assessments. If a student served in a special education program participates in academic assessment (ISTEP+), then he or she should participate in English proficiency assessment (LAS Links), as well. Students identified as both LEP and special education may receive services in both programs, and should be reported in data collections for both programs.

What is the correct procedure for submitting large print tests?

After the student has completed the test, the examiner must transcribe the multiple choice student's responses on multiple choice items from the Large Print test book onto a standard student answer document. The constructed responses will be scored directly from the large print book; therefore they do not need to be transcribed. On the standard student answer book, the examiner should place an "X" on each constructed response item to alert our hand-scorer that he/she must score the responses on the Large Print book. When packaging the tests to be scored, the large print test and the standard test must be submitted for scoring and placed under a separate Group Information Sheet.

Reclassification/Exiting Policy

What if an LEP student scores a Level 5 in spring 2006, a Level 4 in spring 2007, and a Level 5 again in spring 2008? Does this count as two scores of Level 5 on LAS Links, qualifying the student for reclassification?

No. A LEP student must score a Level 5 on LAS Links twice consecutively in order to be reclassified to Fluent English Proficient (FEP) status.

On the DOE-LM, does the FEP classification refer only to those students with a Level 5 score on LAS Links? Do I need to include those students who are not tested with LAS Links (former LEP students, bilingual students, etc.)?

The purpose of the DOE-LM data collection is to gather student information on language minority and immigrant students in the state of Indiana, and collects information for both LEP and FEP students. FEP students may be those with a current Level 5 score on LAS Links, former LEP students who have now been reclassified but are no longer tested, or bilingual students who have entered your district as fluent English proficient. Data for language minority students will continue to be submitted in this data collection until a student either leaves the school corporation or graduates from high school. Data must be collected for all language minority students in the school corporation, independent of a student's participation in a language development program.

Are Level 5 students in the informal monitoring period eligible for academic assessment (ISTEP+) accommodations?

No. The ISTEP+ accommodations for LEP students may only be used for those students with limited English proficiency (a score of Level 1-4 on the LAS Links proficiency assessment). Students having scored Level 5 on the LAS Links are considered FEP.

Are non-public schools required to follow Language Minority and Migrant Programs guidance regarding the reclassification and monitoring of former LEP students?

No, the exiting, reclassification and monitoring requirements do not apply to non-public schools.